Setting Goals & Getting To Work
Community goals are a collective idea for the future

What will we cover today?

- Understanding your community
- Setting a common goal
- Creating action oriented plans
A community is in a constant state of change, before starting any plan you must understand where the community is right not

Vibrant Community Assessment

- Helping LOCALS understand their community
Understanding your community is the first step towards an achievable and implementable plan. The VCA is a tool to help residents and officials create an unbiased review of town. Elements of the VCA include:

- Existing conditions Analysis
- Community Identity Assessment
- Building Standards Review
- Connectedness Review
- Ownership Observations
- External Appearances
Existing Conditions Analysis

Understanding what your community has will help you understand where you need to go. To this extent, existing conditions analysis should be completed for the following categories:

- Building Conditions
- Building utilization
- Infrastructure conditions
- Businesses or amenities
- Underserved services or cohorts

Community Identity Assessment

A “COMMUNITY” is not something that has a set definition, yet it is required to make a place feel like HOME.

- How do residents and visitors define your community?
- What can you identify in your community that people have in common?
- Are there common traditions?
- Does your community support a common vision?
Building Standards Assessment

Building standards are not in place to restrict a private property owner, more importantly they are in place to ensure all people are required to meet the same set of standards

- If you ask more out of people, they typically will live up to the challenge
- Lowering expectations, lowers results

Building standards are a collective set of decisions we, as a community, agree upon regarding the look, feel and behavior of a community

Connectedness

To experience a sense of place, people must get together. Improving how your community connects will improve your community.

- Personal relationships are the foundation of a community
- Find reasons to get people together, or get people together for no reason at all
- To experience place, people must meet face-to-face
Ownership Observations

A vested citizen understands it is THEIR community and the overall well-being of a community is up to them

- Residents serve the community, and the community, in-turn, serves the residents
- Individual actions mount to a large community benefit
- Apathy is the true community killer

External Appearances

The first impression a visitor or prospective resident has of your community is lasting. While the outside appearance is not the most important, it does affect your image.

- Appearances shape opinion
- If a town is blighted, it will affect the feeling or residents
- Appearances of travelers shape the perception of travelers
Goals setting must go beyond listening

Setting a Common Goal

Most problems in a community have a common thread
Frank conversations
Uncomfortable conversations lead to real answers

When talking to residents, individuals and groups it is important to:

- Be frank and concise in the method and manner in which communication is made
- Realize that not all individuals are going to be forward or open
- Pose open ended questions that will spark discussion
- Think about how the interaction will set the stage for future discussions
- Have the tough conversations to in order to gain a deeper level of understanding
Listening with your ears open
Listening and hearing are two separate things

When your community is looking to set a goal, listening is just the first step. To improve “listening” skills:

- Realize that what you hear, is not always what is meant
- Understand that anger and frustration can cloud judgement or degrade conversations
- Learn to be inquisitive and show true empathy in your discussions
- Work on digging deeper into the responses, in order to analyze the potential meaning
Become a “mind reader”
Getting to The Lowest Common Denominator

Many community-wide issues have a similar root issue. Identify this issue to:

- Demonstrate the common thread that holds together the community
- Build trust and compassion among participants
- Link together all parties around a singular cause
- Empower the residents to work together on a common goal
- Foster a sense of togetherness and mass consensus among residents
Don’t feed the community lies
Setting the Right Expectations

Make sure everyone understands that a common goal is a compromise:

- Not everyone will be entirely happy with the goal
- Everyone can support the goal, despite it not being perfect
- Ensure the expectation is set that the goal will change and adapt as the community progresses
- These goals are something that EVERYONE can uphold, not just a few
Creating a unified vision
Building on the root issue

Once your root issue has been found, it is time to build from that point to creating a unified goal:

- Utilizing the common theme, identify potential long term visions that will remedy the issue

- Next, further refine this vision to provide goals for the community in the short, mid and long-term future

- Clearly and concisely create a vision or goal statement.

- Draw a roadmap to illustrate a linkage between beginning and end

- Create milestones, check points or key performance indicators

- Outline the root cause and end goal, outlining how small changes trickle to create the goal

- Create a simple, concise and easy to brand vision statement
Testing the vision
Test your vision

After a draft vision has been prepared, test it with the public to:

- Ensure you heard them right
- Determine if changes are necessary or if residents' views have changed
- Highlight the fact that your community has truly listened, responded, and continues to value feedback
- Ensure that the overall vision will be supported by all the public from young to old
- The community will tell you if you got it wrong
Promote & Personify
Implementation is a long and winding road

Implementing a common vision is a long and often challenging process. Highlights to help implement your community vision include:

• Building capacity in the community
• Empower the residents to be community ambassadors
• Brand the campaign and strategically place it
• When implementing the vision, start with the young and the old
A plan without implementation strategies is an expensive paper weight

Action-Oriented Plans

- Plans are to be implemented, not collect dust
Inclusive Community Input

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Without community support, planning rarely achieves implementation

The residents, business owners and stakeholders should always have a voice in civic projects. In the modern era, it is more important than ever to have a strong public input campaign. Some options for input include:

- Online engagement
- Multi-sensory experiences
- Inclusion at community events (farmers markets, park events, etc.)
- Stakeholder meetings
- Pop-up shop events to highlight the downtown
- Personal interaction is critical

Remember, it is the local community that will support the community, and the community should support the local residents. Their tax dollars will pay for improvements and cost bonding.
Identifying GAPS in services provided to your community
Providing missing services and amenities will provide a new tax base and retain local dollars

Identifying the gaps in services or amenities within your community will:

- Provide a snapshot of services that residents or visitors go elsewhere to utilize
- Provide a clear picture of the leakage in sales tax revenue for each amenity
- Identify which goods or services will be sustainable long-term
- Provide a concise image of what the community or main street group should be proactively marketing to create a vibrant downtown

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**Location Quotient**

**Lamar**

- 74 total businesses
- 0 Jewelry stores
- 0% of all business are Jewelry Stores
- Deficient in Jewelry Stores

**Boulder**

- 835 total businesses
- 11 Jewelry stores
- 1.3% of all businesses are jewelry stores
- Deficient in Jewelry Stores

74 total business x 1.3% = 1 business
1 jewelry business is projected to have an annual revenue of $465,471
This will capture $32,117.49 per year in sales tax at Lamar’s 6.9% sales tax rate
This will provide a total additional revenue direct to Lamar of $13,964.13 annually
Focus on Incremental Goals
Building Capacity & Enthusiasm

Not all successful plans are designing grand projects and not all catalyst projects need to be substantial. As part of the planning process, each community should:

- Identify projects that will be impactful, yet cheap and easy to implement
- Foster a climate that removes the chance of apathetic residents
- Prepare a prioritized list of projects that will include individuals and community based groups responsible for implementation
- Build momentum and capacity through small projects first, escalating to larger when funding and capacity is available

By taking on smaller projects, residents will see change more quickly, building enthusiasm and removing apathy.
Action Oriented and Specific
Answer the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE AND HOW

Communities often have fantastic goals, yet lack the follow through to successfully implement. It is important that all goals, recommendations or strategies are:

- Action oriented
- Time bound
- Specific to the individual or party responsible for completion
- Prioritized
- Providing accountability for implementation
Plan for the short before the long
Multi-stage goals provide impact at all levels

Creating interest and visible progress is critical for a community to show residents and visitors that changes are happening:

- Successful plans provide short, mid and long term goals
- Stages goals will provide a “progress” milestone at intervals
- Continual progress will retain the support of the community
- Typical milestone terms are:
  - Short term - 2-3 years
  - Mid term - 3-7 years
  - Long term - 7-15 years
Public – Private Partnership
Ensuring the DIRT of development

Ensuring the Duration, Intensity, rate and Timing of private development is how communities can meet goals, while reducing cost to taxpayers. Steps to helping ensure the DIRT of development are:

- Creating a strong set of guidelines for architectural, streetscape and civic spaces
- Developing potential concessions or partnerships with private developers
- Preparing adaptive re-use studies for critical buildings
- Preparing developer due diligence reports
- Tightening up future land use maps and zoning and/or development codes
Creating a “MAP” for your community
A Master Plan is only as good as the guidance it provides

Master Plans should be prepared to provide a clear "map" or "route" for each community to follow for achieving their common goal. Understanding this, it is critical that each master plan:

- Clearly mark the starting point and the desired ending point
- Outline the desired path for achieving the goal
- Provide solutions on what to do if a "roadblock" or "pot hole" is encountered
- Clearly outline what is needed to successfully achieve the goal
Catalyst Projects
Determine YOUR catalyst

Catalyst projects will create an impact in your community and show the residents success stories. Each catalyst should be unique to your community. Sample catalyst projects are:

- Adaptive reuse projects
- Streetscape projects
- Vegetation installations
- Civic space creation
- Alleyway activation
- Signage projects
- Façade programs
- Park rehabilitation or creation
Master Plan Suggestions

- Clear and concise
- Action oriented
- Short, medium and long term goals
- Focus on utilizing or maximizing community capacity
- Identify the missing services within your downtown
- Prepare a framework for implementation
Questions/Comments
If you want a copy of the presentation, leave me a card or email be at the address below:

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